



# Washington State Department of **CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES**

Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) Meeting  
April 9, 2024

## **2024 Early Learning End of Session Legislative Update**

### **BILLS**

[SHB 1916](#) was DCYF's only Agency Request for Legislation (ARL) during the 2024 session. This bill is a technical fix to ensure Early Support for Infants & Toddlers (ESIT) statute better aligns with program reality. Current law is complex, and limits DCYF and local ESIT provider agencies from counting eligible children for the full number of months they receive services. The ARL changes the ESIT monthly count date to the last business day of the month and clarifies language that currently creates ambiguity in billing for mid-month entries and exits for services.

[HB 2111](#) reorganizes and recodifies existing working connections child care (WCCC) program requirements: RCW 43.216, RCW 43.216.1368, RCW 43.216.1364, RCW 43.216.145, RCW 43.216.136, RCW 43.216.139, RCW 43.216.141, RCW 43.216.143, RCW 43.216.730, and RCW 43.216.749; and repeals provisions that are expired and or no longer relevant, RCW 43.216.725 and RCW 43.216.137. These changes are technical in nature and are not substantive.

[2SHB 2124](#) nothing in this act modifies or exempts applicants from WCCC income eligibility requirements. This act does three main things. In section 1 and 4, WCCC approved activities are expanded to include Early ECEAP and Early Head Start participation. Section 2 expands WCCC subsidy to include additional early learning provider employment so long as the household income is at or below 85 percent of the state median income adjusted for family size (additional employment includes ECEAP, Early ECEAP, Head Start, and Early Head Start programs). Section 3 requires that the Dual Language Rate Enhancement (Dual Rate) be adjusted for inflation every two years regardless of funds appropriated for this purpose. All changes are effective November 1, 2024. This bill is funded in the supplemental operating budget.

[SHB 1945](#) makes clear that a child is income eligible for WCCC, ECEAP, and Early ECEAP when a member of the child's assistance unit is eligible for and receiving state or federal food assistance; however, the ECEAP provision is subject to space availability. These changes will be effective November 1, 2024. The ECEAP program income eligibility will no longer be subject to space availability effective August 1, 2030.

[SHB 2195](#) this act does a few things:

1. Removes Early Learning Facilities (ELF) award limits for predesign, predevelopment, major construction and purchase of early learning facility, and minor renovations;
2. Translation services are added as an activity allowable as an administrative cost;
3. A provision has been added to prioritize construction/renovation/repair grants for those projects ready for construction (items 1-3 are effective July 1, 2025);  
and
4. Also allows ELF facilities co-located with housing developments to receive state funding for 90% of the project cost, regardless of match.
5. No longer requires Commerce to develop rules (items 4-5 are effective June 5, 2024).

[SSB 5774](#) requires DCYF to provide fingerprinting services at early learning and child welfare offices throughout the state. The funding provided is based on the underlying fiscal assumption of rolling out, 0.5 FTE at each of 7 offices, prioritizing areas that lack convenient access to fingerprinting services. \$254K is appropriated for this purpose and the legislation is effective immediately.

[E2SSB 6109](#), **Section 201** in addition to adding a new chapter to RCW 43.216, this section of the act requires DCYF to accomplish one objective and provides an optional objective, both of which are subject to \$1.579 million in funding appropriated for the following purposes:

1. *Shall* establish a contracted child care slot pilot program for infants receiving child protective services in locales with the historically highest rates of child welfare screened-in intake due to the exposure or presence of high-potency synthetic opioids in the home; [*emphasis added*] and
2. Unused contracted child care slots in the pilot program *may* be used for children who are screened-in due to a parent's substance use disorder for substances other than a high-potency synthetic opioid. [*emphasis added*]

## **Supplemental Operating Budget**

### **DCYF PROVISOS**

#### **Rates**

ECEAP slot rates increase by 5 percent for full day slots (school day) and 9 percent for extended day (working day), beginning July 1, 2024. Budget provides an additional \$8.271 million to fund these increases.

Nonstandard Hours Bonus from \$135 to \$150 per child per month, beginning July 1, 2024. Budget provides an additional \$0.772 million to fund this increase.

Infant Rate Enhancement from \$90 to \$300 per month, beginning July 1, 2024. Budget provides an additional \$5.561 million to fund this increase.

#### **Coordinated Recruitment and Enrollment Appropriations**

\$1.4 million, FY 2025, to implement chapter 420, Laws of 2023 ([2SHB 1550](#)). 2SHB 1550 section (1)(4)(d) requires DCYF to collaboratively work with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction on developing a “statewide coordinated eligibility, recruitment, enrollment, and selection best practices and provide technical assistance to those implementing a transition to kindergarten program to support connections with local early learning providers.” This funding will be used to create a collaborative system of support and leverage resources at the state, regional, and local level to support increased access based on families’ needs and choice.

#### **Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation**

Description: Existing contract for infant and early childhood mental health consultation.

Summary of Change: Provides additional funding and reserves \$150K of this additional funding specifically for consultation services to support rural schools and child care programs in rural communities.

Additional Funding: \$1.75 million

#### **Relationship-Based Professional Development Provider Support**

Description: Existing contract with an organization that provides relationship-based professional development support to providers to establish new affordable, high-quality child care and early learning programs.

Summary of Change: Provides additional funding and clarifies that the contract establishes *and supports* new affordable, high-quality child care and early learning programs. [*emphasis added*]

Additional Funding: \$2.5 million

### **Inclusion Mentorship Program (NEW)**

Description: Contract with a non-profit entity that implements an inclusive mentorship program (program) provided to child care and early learning providers (providers). Program outcomes are to ensure providers have the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively support children with disabilities, developmental delays, or challenging behavioral needs. There are no reporting requirements.

Funding: \$650,000

### **Snohomish County Early Learning Coalition (NEW)**

Description: Contract with Snohomish County Early Learning Coalition (the Coalition) for the purposes of the Coalition to develop a leadership team that will identify and report on ways to strengthen Snohomish County's early learning community.

Funding: Total \$200,000; (\$30,000 fiscal year 2024; and \$170,000 fiscal year 2025).

### **Spokane Child Care Workforce and Capacity Pilot Program (NEW)**

Description: Contract with a local Spokane non-profit entity to administer a pilot program to increase child care workforce and capacity in the greater Spokane area. The pilot must include a minimum of 10 child care facilities to engage in culture index and blueprint assessments.

Funding: \$250,000 fiscal year 2025.

### **OTHER AGENCIES' PROVISOS**

#### **Early Achiever Scholars and Reporting (New):**

Agency: State Board of Community and Technical Colleges (CTC)

Description: Program funding for community colleges staff to recruit, advise, and support early achiever scholars completing their early childhood qualifications. CTC must prioritize colleges with the longest wait list, and must collaborate with DCYF to submit a report, by September 30, 2024, related to early achievers grant participation data, including enrollment and waitlists data for the grant program.

Funding: \$801,000

#### **Near site/Onsite Child Care for Construction Workers (New):**

Agency: Department of Commerce (Commerce)

Description: Pilot grant program that creates and implements near-site and onsite child care serving children of construction workers, and contract for technical assistance. Grant funds may be used to acquire, renovate, or construct a child care facility, as well as for administrative start-up costs, licensing costs, reporting to Commerce, and for creating sustainability plans. Commerce must report on the results of the pilot program by June 30, 2025.

Funding: Total \$325,000, (\$300,000 appropriated for grants and \$25,000 for contracted technical assistance).

### **Supplemental Capital Budget**

#### **OTHER AGENCIES' PROVISOS**

Agency: Department of Commerce

Description: Early Learning Facilities (or ELF) Competitive Grants

Additional Funding: \$4.5 million

Description: ELF Minor Renovation Grants

Additional Funding: \$2.35 million